>

Title : Need for taking over of Kolhapur Airport by Airport Authority of India.

SHRI S.D. MANDLIK (KOLHAPUR): The Kolhapur air port is located in agricultural production zone. The items like flowers, mango's of various varities, hand crafted goods, variety of Jaugary and hand crafted silver ornaments are being exported from Kolhapur and surrounding districts like Sangli and Ratnagiri through Mumbai Air Terminal.

In addition to above various industrial machine and parts are also being exported from Kolhapur Industrial Estates of Shiroli, Gokul Shirgaon and Kagal. Kolhapur district also has 22 spining mills and majority of them manufacture export quality yarn which is also exported from Mumbai. The District also boasts of 18 functional sugar mills and therefore has a potential of heavy passenger traffic.

The Kolhapur Air Port was made operational in the year 1987 and was taken over by Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) on 16.4.1997 from Air Port Authority of India. Since then the air port maintenance is being looked after by MIDC Maharashtra.

Recently the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Chief Executive Officer MIDC have agreed to handover airstrips at Gondia, Kolhapur, Amravati, Yeotmal and Ratnagiri in Maharashtra to Airport Authority of India.

Sir, in case these airstrips are taken over for maintenance and operation by the Airports Authority of India it would ensure latest aviation standards as well as contribute to the development of air services and related economic activities.

I urge upon the Central Government to direct the Airport Authority of India for taking over the airstrips from the MIDC as early as possible.